

Youth Voter Turnout in Jamaica: A Case Study of the 2016 General Election

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Abstract : Since the early 1990's voter turnout in Jamaica has been abysmal. More troubling, the group less interested in voting are the 'articulate minority' (educated youths, aged 18-35). Using surveys, media commentaries and data from the Electoral Commission of Jamaica, this study explores the relationship between educated youths and traditional politics in Jamaica. Specifically, it raises questions about why the 'articulate minority' did not vote in the 2016 general election. This will be done by highlighting the political and socio-economic reasons affecting their participation in the electoral process, their opinions of who is responsible for low voter turnout in Jamaica, and what they think needs to be done to encourage people in general to vote. The findings reveal that lack of interest in the democratic and electoral process by the 'articulate minority' is due to their growing distrust of politicians and political parties, and lack of confidence in the political process.

Keywords : articulate minority, Jamaica, voter apathy, voter turnout

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